

STATE OF IOWA

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION JUDY A. JEFFREY, DIRECTOR

NEWS RELEASE For Immediate Release October 14, 2009

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Iowa NAEP Scores Higher Than National Average

Static growth on scores a call to action for implementation of the lowa Core Curriculum.

DES MOINES, Iowa – lowa students who took the 2009 National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) tests in math once again scored above the national average. While Iowa continues to outpace the national average score, its static year-to-year growth on NAEP is a continued call to action for the implementation of the Iowa Core Curriculum.

"The blueprint that guides the NAEP assessment was reviewed in the development of the Iowa Core Curriculum, along with national research, other state standards, and international standards," Iowa Department of Education Director Judy Jeffrey said. "The work that schools are currently undertaking to implement the Iowa Core is essential to help ensure Iowa students learn the skills and concepts needed for continued achievement.

For example, NAEP begins testing algebraic concepts and statistics starting in grade 4. These same math concepts are in the Iowa Core Curriculum, starting at the elementary school level.

The average scale score for the sample group of Iowa 4th graders in math was 243, which was the same as it was in 2007 when Iowa students last took the NAEP exam. This compares to the national average of 239 in 2007 and 2009. The average scale score for the sample group of Iowa 8th graders in math was 284, which is one point lower than 2007. This compares to the national average of 282 in 2009 and 280 in 2007. The scale for the NAEP test is 1-500.

Unlike the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills/Iowa Tests of Educational Development, which test all students in certain grades, the NAEP tests are administered to a sample group of public school students. In Iowa, 2,803 4th graders took the 2009 math NAEP tests out of a total of 35,031 state-wide. There were 2,644 8th graders that took tests, out of 35,324 state-wide.

A long-term view of the data shows that the state also lowered the percent of 4th and 8th grade students scoring below the basic level. In 1992, 28 percent of the 4th grade students tested scored below the basic level. In 2009, this was reduced to 13 percent. A 4th grade student must receive a score of at least 214 to achieve the basic level. In 1990, 30 percent of lowa's 8th graders tested scored below the basic level. In 2009, this was reduced to 24 percent. Eighth-grade students must receive a scale score of at least 262 to be at the basic level.

For more information on NAEP, please visit the National Report Card website at http://nationsreportcard.gov/ or the Iowa Department of Education website at http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=677&Itemid=1312.

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